

public will be given ample opportunities to state their views. What I just told you is meant not only for you but also for the other Members of this Assembly who may have their remarks to offer on the subject.

The Member next spoke about the work of the Special Officer, Industrial Survey. That Officer was, no doubt, enthusiastic but his methods of work were not right. His papers published in the Gazette were not of great use. What was required was to collect statistics regarding industries.

The standing complaint of the people had been that the staff in the Public Works Department far exceeded the real necessity. The Member then dwelt upon the want of proportion in the distribution of the P. W. D. allotment and explained his statement by reading certain items from the list of public works. He also advocated the need for introducing a better system of working such institutions as the School of Arts.

Finally, the Member summarised his suggestions thus:—

(1) Establishment of a Retrenchment Committee whose duty should be to diminish the cost of administration and institute a system of recruitment and promotion in the public service.

(2) The appointment of a Rules Committee for the interpretation of the Travancore Service Regulations.

(3) The discussion of the State Budget in the Legislative Council and the Popular Assembly before finally passing it.

(4) The imposition of income-tax.

(5) Levy of super-taxes on those who had been, for historical reasons, unfairly exempted, such as the Swaroopams and Edavagays.

(6) Appointment of a Committee to consider the question of incidence of taxation.

In conclusion, the Member submitted that, though the subject of finance had been dealt with by several Members at successive sessions of the Assembly, not one G. O. had so far been issued on that important question. That was highly to be regretted. He prayed that greater attention might be paid to it.

Deewan's reply.—Noted.

2. State Finance.

Mr. P. Padmanabhan Tampi (Member, Kalkulam Taluk) made a few remarks on administration in general and proceeded to discuss the unproportionate increase of expenditure as compared with income. He then made a few observations on the finances of the State for the years 1090-1092. In considering the economic condition of the people, the Member regretted that there were no data available to gauge the material condition of His Highness' subjects. The average cultivated area per head of population was only .59 acre. 66 per cent of the population was concerned with agriculture which afforded means of subsistence to the remaining 34 per cent. The average *pattom* per acre of wet and garden lands throughout the State, *viz.*, 17½ *paras* of paddy and 1¼ Rs. respectively, also showed that the productive capacity of arable lands was of a low order. The seasonal statements published in the Administration Reports for the last 25 years would clearly convince any one that, by the variations of the rainfall, the people had to suffer considerably either because there was too much of rain or too little of it. Though the object of the Government was not to enhance the revenue, yet, by the completion of the revenue settlement, the land tax had risen from 16½ lakhs to 36½ lakhs of rupees per year. The Member urged that there should be a permanency in the settlement of land revenue. The growth of Excise revenue was really alarming, for the consumption of country and foreign liquors, opium and ganja was increasing abnormally. It was the prime duty of Government to check the ever-increasing consumption of alcoholic spirits, opium and ganja among the people. The habit of smoking was widely spreading among the school-going population. The growing evil should be checked. It was also highly desirable to make the

cost of spirits prohibitive. A heavy duty should be imposed on foreign liquors and the price of country liquor should be increased. The recent increase of court fees was objectionable. The Member submitted that justice should never be taxed more than was absolutely necessary. In any case, it should not be taxed with a view to meet other demands. The principle of local taxation was next condemned by the Member and he pointed out that the increase under that item, during the past 8 years, was an undesirable feature. Coming to primary education, the Member contended that the expenditure was not sufficient and did not come up to the level of other Western countries. He objected to the proposal of Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai to levy an income-tax and observed that the economic condition of the people did not warrant any additional impost of the kind suggested. If the income of Government was to be increased without taxing the people directly or indirectly, Government should turn their attention to the Forests. Though one-third of the area of the State was declared as Reserved Forests, the net revenue derived therefrom was comparatively very small. He then pointed out that the cultivation of rubber, camphor, sandal-wood, &c., by the Forest Department would be highly useful as an object lesson to the people. The Member next recommended a reduction in the number of administrative Divisions and Taluks. It was the general impression that, of all the departments of the State, the Public Works Department consumed a large portion of the revenue. But his opinion was that the budget of that department should not be reduced to a great extent, for the country should be developed by the projecting and carrying out of public works. There were not adequate irrigation facilities except in certain *pakuthies* of Nanjanad and Edanad. The valuable up-country products were either wasted or sold for inadequate prices for want of communication. He was against the enormous expenditure incurred in the erection of palatial public buildings and the maintenance of costly establishments. The staff of the Public Works Department was unduly large and was out of all proportion to the real requirements of the State. It was necessary to appoint an expert in Engineering in the Huzar Office to scrutinise the estimates submitted by the department. The Police Department also admitted of retrenchment. The expenditure in the Judicial Department was equally heavy. The increase of expenditure was chiefly due to the superfluity of courts and judges. The increase of litigation was mainly due to the increase of courts and so the number of courts should be reduced appreciably. The introduction of Village Panchayat Courts in every taluk with at least Rs. 50 jurisdiction and also the establishment of Small Cause Courts with Rs. 500 jurisdiction would give relief to the Munsiffs and Judges. Though Travancore was an agricultural country, it was far behind other countries in the development of agriculture. The amount spent on the department was very small. In conclusion, the Member stated that it was impossible to make any real advance among the people without educating them. The future prosperity of Travancore depended to a great extent upon the advancement of agriculture and industry which could be developed and spread only by mass education. He earnestly requested that no time should be lost and no expenditure stinted to place Travancore on a footing of equality with other advanced countries of the world.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

II. MAIN HEADS OF REVENUE.

(1) LAND REVENUE.

3. Abrogation of the rule requiring the sanction of Government for filing civil suits in respect of *Kandukrishi* lands and the commutation into money of the paddy tax on *Sripandaravagai* and *Kandukrishi* holdings.

Mr. M. Kesava Pillai (Member, Neyyattinkara Taluk) said that it was not fair to maintain a distinction between *Kandukrishi* or Crown lands and other lands in the State. Formerly, the distinction was not kept up. In para 342 of *Dewan Ramaiengar's Settlement Memorandum*, it was declared that *Kandukrishi* tenants